

REMARKS

In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, reconsideration of the rejections and further consideration are requested.

Claims 1-17 were pending in this application. Claims 1-16 are amended herein, claim 17 is cancelled herein, and claim 18 is added herein. Thus, claims 1-16 and 18 are currently pending in this application. No new matter has been added.

The specification and abstract have been carefully reviewed and revised to make grammatical and idiomatic improvements in order to aid the Examiner in further consideration of the application. A substitute specification and abstract including the revisions have been prepared and are submitted herewith. No new matter has been added. Also submitted herewith are marked-up copies of the substitute specification and abstract indicating the changes incorporated therein.

Claims 1-17 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 on the basis that the claimed invention is directed towards non-statutory subject matter. The Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for discussing this rejection with the Applicants' representative. During the discussion, the Examiner clarified the 35 U.S.C. § 101 rejection by explaining that the subject matter of the claims should be "embodied on a computer-readable medium."

Regarding claims 1-13, the Applicants have amended independent claim 1 to recite statutory subject matter under 35 U.S.C. § 101.

Regarding claims 14-16, independent claim 14 claims a display screen management method, and as such recites a process. 35 U.S.C. § 101 requires that whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter is entitled to obtain a patent. Because claim 14 recites a process, it contains statutory subject matter as defined by 35 U.S.C. § 101. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that claim 14 recites statutory subject matter under 35 U.S.C. § 101.

Claim 17 has been cancelled, thus rendering the 35 U.S.C. § 101 rejection of claim 17 moot.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, the Applicants respectfully request that the 35 U.S.C. § 101 rejections of claims 1-17 be withdrawn.

Claims 1-6 and 12-17 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Takano (U.S. Patent No. 5,764,214) (hereinafter referred to as “Takano”) in view of Shitahaku (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0037753) (hereinafter referred to as “Shitahaku”). Claims 7-11 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Takano in view of Shitahaku and further in view of Hourvitz et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,388,201) (hereinafter referred to as “Hourvitz”). Claim 17 is cancelled herein, thus rendering the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection of claim 17 moot.

Claims 1 and 14 originally recited “...instruction to switch...” As discussed in paragraph 0032, “ ‘screen switching’ indicates that a new switching target screen is displayed over (closer to the user than) a currently displayed screen, due to a screen transition.” To make claims 1 and 14 easier to understand, we have revised claims 1 and 14 by replacing the term “switch” with the explanation provided in paragraph 0032. Please note that these claim revisions were not made to distinguish the invention, as recited in original claims 1 and 14, from the references applied by the Examiner.

The above-mentioned rejections are traversed for the following reasons.

With exemplary reference to the Figures, claim 1 sets forth a display screen management apparatus, comprising: a saving section 104 for saving screen information about the plurality of screens; and a display screen management unit 10 comprising a computer program recorded on a computer-readable storage medium that causes the display screen management apparatus to execute at least switching and displaying of a plurality of screens on a display device 106 by screen transition, the computer program of the display screen management unit comprising: an instruction section 102 operable to provide an instruction to display one of the plurality of screens as a switching target screen over at least another one of the plurality of screens as a currently displayed screen in response to an external request; a screen control section 103 operable to control a display on the display device 106 in accordance with the instruction from the instruction section 102; and a screen discard determination section 105 operable to compare the currently displayed screen with the switching target screen indicated by the instruction section 102, based on the screen information saved in the saving section 104, to determine whether or not the currently displayed screen is to be discarded, wherein, when the screen discard determination section 105 determines that the currently displayed

screen is to be discarded, the screen control section 103 discards information about the currently displayed screen from the saving section 104.

Thus, claim 1 requires a display screen management apparatus including, in part, a screen discard determination section operable to compare a currently displayed screen with a switching target screen indicated by an instruction section, based on screen information saved in a saving section, to determine whether or not the currently displayed screen is to be discarded. When the screen discard determination section determines that the currently displayed screen is to be discarded, the screen control section discards information about the currently displayed screen from the saving section.

As recognized by the Examiner, Takano does not disclose “a screen discard determination section of comparing the currently displayed screen with a switching target screen indicated by the instruction section based on the screen information saved in the saving section, to determine whether or not the currently displayed screen is discarded.” Moreover, the Examiner recognized that Takano does not disclose “wherein, when the screen discard determination section determines that the currently displayed screen is discarded, the screen control section discard information about the currently displayed screen from the saving section.”

The Examiner cited Shitahaku for teaching “a screen discard determination section of comparing the currently displayed screen with a switching target screen indicated by the instruction section based on the screen information saved in the saving section, to determine whether or not the currently displayed screen is discarded.” Moreover the Examiner cited Shitahaku for teaching “wherein, when the screen discard determination section determines that the currently displayed screen is discarded, the screen control section discard information about the currently displayed screen from the saving section,” as recited in claim 1.

Shitahaku discloses a window display switching control on a portable telephone set used for a mobile communication system. Specifically, an operation control section 21 acquires information of an application 1 displayed at a front position on a screen from a history management section 22, and acquires a priority of the application 1 at the front position on the screen from a priority management section 23.

The operation control section 23 compares the priority of an application currently being displayed at the front position on the screen with the priority of the application from which a launch instruction was received. If the priority of the application currently displayed on the screen is higher than that of the application from which the launch instruction was received, the application from which the launch instruction was received is not made active.

If the priority of the currently active application that a user sees is equal to or lower than that of the application from which the launch instruction was received, the operation control section 21 makes active the application from which the launch instruction was received.

Upon reception of a quit instruction from the application 1, the operation control section 21 records, in an operation state storage section 24, the quit state of the application from which the quit instruction was received, and instructs the history management section 22 to erase the history information. When the application quits, the history management section 22 searches the priority data storage section 25 for an application to be displayed next and displays it.

Notably, Shitahaku does not disclose comparing a currently displayed screen with a switching target screen to determine whether or not the currently displayed screen is to be discarded. Instead, Shitahaku discloses that the operation control section 21 compares the priority of the application currently being displayed at the front position on the screen with the priority of the application from which a launch instruction was received, to determine which application to make active, but not for the purpose of determining whether or not a currently displayed screen is to be discarded. Moreover, Shitahaku discloses that upon reception of a quit instruction from the application 1 the operation control section 21 instructs the history management section 22 to erase the history information. When the application quits, the history management section 24 searches the priority data storage section 25 for an application to be displayed next and displays it. Note, however, that Shitahaku's "quit instruction" is not the result of a comparison and, accordingly, this feature of Shitahaku does not meet the claim limitations requiring the screen determination section to be operable to compare screens and discard one of the screens based upon the comparison.

Furthermore, there is no suggestion or disclosure in Shitahaku to modify the operation control section 21 to compare screens against each other and to erase history information based upon the comparison. In other words, Shitahaku does not disclose a screen discard determination section operable to compare a currently displayed screen with a switching target screen indicated by an instruction section, based on screen information saved in a saving section, to determine whether or not the currently displayed screen is to be discarded, such that when the screen discard determination section determines that the currently displayed screen is to be discarded, the screen control section discards information about the currently displayed screen from the saving section, as recited in claim 1. Therefore, Shitahaku fails to address the deficiencies of Takano.

The Examiner cited Hourvitz for teaching a controller used to monitor window size, position and status. However, Hourvitz also fails to address the deficiencies of Takano.

Regarding claims 14 and 18, they are patentable over the references relied upon in the rejection for reasons similar to those set forth above in support of claim 1. That is, claims 14 and 18 similarly include, in part, determining whether or not a currently displayed screen is to be discarded by comparing the currently displayed screen with an indicated switching target screen based on previously saved screen information, and discarding information about the currently displayed screen when it is determined that the currently displayed screen is to be discarded.


Because of the above mentioned distinctions, it is believe clear that claims 1-16 and 18 are patentable over the references relied upon in the rejections. Furthermore, it is submitted that the distinctions are such that the person having ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention would have no reason to make any combination of the references of record in such a manner as to result in, or otherwise render obvious, the present invention as recited in claims 1-16 and 18. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1-16 and 18 are clearly allowable over the prior art of record.

In view of the foregoing amendments or remarks, all of the claims now active in this application are believed to be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and favorable action are respectfully solicited.

Should the Examiner believe there are any remaining issues that must be resolved before this application can be passed to issue, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact the undersigned by telephone in order to resolve such issues.

Respectfully submitted,

Ken YAMASHITA, et al.

By: 
Kevin McDermott
Registration No. 48,113
Attorney for Applicants

KM/CRW/km
Washington, D.C. 20006-1021
Telephone (202) 721-8200
Facsimile (202) 721-8250
January 31, 2008